

### **Abstract**

A method and system are provided for exchanging legacy network management messages securely. Legacy management messages are embedded as a user-defined object within SNMP messages. The SNMP messages are transmitted to managed nodes using a secure version of SNMP, such as SNMPv3. The managed nodes extract and process the legacy management messages from the SNMP messages. Any legacy response message is embedded within an SNMP message and transmitted back to the management station, which extracts the legacy response for processing. The method and system thereby allow legacy network management systems to be maintained, while adding a feature which permits more secure communication of the legacy management messages.